

The Florentines and Venetians, who succeeded the bards, did much to reorganize credit and formed gre; houses with branches directed by the co-partners. Tl Medici in the fifteenth century had not less than sixtee branch houses in the principal commercial cities.<sup>1</sup> Whe Holland became a centre of capital and enterprise, Amste: dam superseded Antwerp in commercial influence, and tl: available capital of the world was attracted there by the ea cellent organization of the Bank of Amsterdam. The Jewis colony included Jews from Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Gei many. At Hamburg the Jewish community, formed froi Portuguese refugees, was credited with a considerable shai in the creation of the public bank.<sup>8</sup>

The word "bank " is derived from the public loans mad by the Italian cities rather than to the business of bankin. as understood in later times. The usual Italian name o a public loan was *monte*, signifying a joint-stock fund. Th Germans were influential in Italy during the Middle Ages especially about the time when a forced loan of one per cent was levied by the city of Venice in 1171 upon the propert of all citizens. Their name for a joint-stock fund was *banck* meaning a heap or mound, which the Italians converte< into *banco* and employed for an accumulation of either stocl or money. The definition of a bank given in an Italian dictionary in 1659 was " Monte, a standing Bank, or Mount of money, as they have in divers cities in Italy." A mor< recent writer, Cibrario, says: " Regarding the Theory oJ Credit, which I have said was invented by the Italian cities it is known that the first Bank, or public debt (*il Prio Bana o Debito Pubblico*), was erected in Venice in 1171.'" \* The wore was adopted into English, meaning indifferently public loan\*

<sup>1</sup> Jannet, *Le Credit Populaire et les Banques en Italic*, 6.

<sup>5</sup>jannet, *Le Capital au XIXe Siecle*, 434.

<sup>3</sup> MacLeod, *Theory of Credit*, II., 578. Professor MacLeod insist! that the common derivation of the word "bank" from the counter upon which the money-changers kept their money, is without foundation. He says : " The Italian money-changers, as such, were never called *Banchieri*in the Middle Ages."